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THE ORGANIZER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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March 1, 1939

REPORT REVEALS FAILURE OF EFFICIENCY RATINGS

Striking evidence of the failure of the system of efficiency ratings now in use in the Government service is revealed in a factual report of ratings for 1938 issued by the Office of Personnel of the Department of Agriculture. The report shows the almost complete lack of uniformity of standards among graders of the 24 bureaus of the Department and at the same time brings to light a strong bias in all bureaus against employees in the lower salaried classes.

Among the larger bureaus, the proportions of "Excellent" ratings ranged from 12 to 57 percent! One bureau gave 31 percent "Good", another gave 3 percent. The report scouts the idea that these wide variations "can mean that there is actually that much difference in the efficiency of employees" but points out that "it indicates rather that the standards which raters in one bureau have in mind when thinking of the typical 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' employee are quite different from the standards being used in other jurisdictions."

While the inequities of the rating system shown to exist from bureau to bureau are very great, they are hardly as startling as those which are revealed from grade to grade. The report clearly shows that the ratings are biased against employees in the clerical, custodial and lower professional categories. Among the approximately 5,000 employees in the CAF-1, CAF-2 and CAF-3 grades, less than 25 percent were rated "Excellent" while more than 45 percent of those in the higher salaried grades in the CAF service were so rated. Among professional employees the same

NEXT MEETING

Monday, March 13, 8 P. M.

532 - 17th St. N. W.

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condition exists. Of the 1100 P-1, P-2 and P-3 employees, less than 25 percent were rated "Excellent" while 35 percent in P-4 and 54 percent in P-5 were so rated. in the lower paid brackets of the sub-professional and custodial services of the Department the ratings were also markedly lower than among the higher paid supervisory personnel.

The factual findings of the Office of Personnel take on added significance in the light of recent complaints and widespread dissatisfaction among employees concerning the efficiency rating system, notably in the Farm Security Administration.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DANCE

All employees of the Department are invited to a St. Patrick's Day dance to be held by Local 2 on Saturday, March 18. The dance will be held at UFWA headquarters, 532-17th Street N W at 8 p.m. Tickets at 35 cents may be purchased at the door. Come and bring your friends.

DIES AND THE NLRB

"The National Labor Relations Act simply sets up an agency to protect the lawful rights of labor. Those only who hate labor attack the agencies which serve labor ... It was not the intention of Congress to delegate to Mr. Dies the authority to attack labor nor the organizations or agencies set up to protect the rights of labor." (Speech of Hon. Kent E. Keller of Illinois in the House of Representatives, February 3, 1939)

LABOR UNIONS AND THE FARMER

"... Farmers have everything to gain from an improvement in the conditions of labor for which organized labor has been striving. There is no real ground for the farmers' fear that agriculture will be injured by the legitimate activities of labor unions ... If farmers really understand the situation, they will never allow themselves to be used as catspaws in any anti-labor front secretly sponsored by the ultra-reactionary industrial interests" (Secretary Wallace at Des Moines, Iowa, February 18, 1939)

* * * *

Take part in the activities of your Union.

Join the UFWA!

MASS MEETING ON LEGISLATION TO BE HELD MARCH 9

A District-wide mass meeting on legislation for Federal workers has been arranged by the UFWA for Thursday, March 9 at 8 p m at the Labor Department Auditorium. Speakers at this meeting will include Senator James Mead of New York, Representative Robert Ramspeck of Georgia, chairman of the House Civil Service Committee, James Carey, secretary of the CIO, and Eleanor Nelson, secretary-treasurer of UFWA.

Because laws enacted by Congress determine the conditions of work for Government employees, it is important that they participate in such a meeting as this to express their views on legislation now before the present Congress. These cover such vital matters as automatic salary increases, the 35 hour week, overtime compensation, appeals procedure, the \$1200 minimum wage, and extension of the merit system under the Civil Service. Remember the day: Thursday, March 9, the time: 8 p m - and the place: Department of Labor Auditorium.

ON THE LABOR FRONT

Washingtonians are watching with interest, the efforts of the Terminal Co., which operates Union Station, to evade the Wages and Hours law. To avoid paying the redcaps at the station, the 25 cent an hour minimum wage which the law provides, the company contended that redcaps were not employees. When the Interstate Commerce Commission rejected this contention, the device of deducting tips from wage payments was resorted to. The redcaps soon found it "expedient" to report at least \$2 a day in tips and thus relieve the company of making any wage payments. Several redcaps who reported less than \$2 promptly received dismissal notices. The railroads who operate through the Terminal Co. are determined that the public shall continue to pay these wage costs.

EMPLOYEE ASKS UNION TO INVESTIGATE PARKING PRIVILEGES

To the Organizer: I am one of the thousands who drive to and from work. Although I have been working in Agriculture for over five years I have never been assigned one of the coveted parking spaces in the courts. Yet I know other people who have come to the Department quite recently and already have such parking spaces. Couldn't something be done to see that everyone has an equal chance at the limited number of free spaces available? It shouldn't matter whether his salary is \$1200 or \$5000 either. - A driver

HERE AND THERE WITH AGRICULTURE LOCAL 2

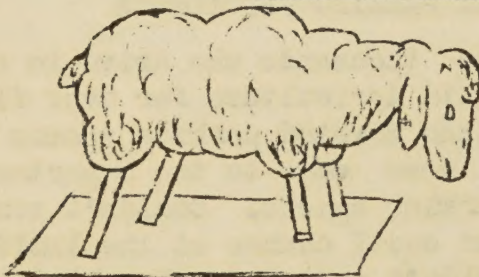
IN A LETTER TO PERSONNEL DIRECTOR HENDRICKSON, President Si Rottenberg of Local 2 calls his attention to the failure of the committee investigating ratings in Farm Security to render a report on its findings. This committee was set up when Local 2 acted on complaints of employees that the ratings of their bureau were so much lower than those in other bureaus of the Department as to work a hardship in cases of transfer and promotion. The letter states that "In order for any benefit to be derived from the work of this committee, we feel it should submit a comprehensive report prior to the annual preparation of efficiency ratings this year."

OUR NEW RECORDING SECRETARY IS SOPHIA PODOLSKY who was elected at the last meeting of Local 2 to succeed Elizabeth Toohey who has left the Department. At the same meeting Edward Huberman and Edmond Harris were chosen to serve on the Executive Committee.

PROSPECTS OF THE SOUTH is the subject of a series of 4 lectures which have been arranged by Local 2 for employees of the Department of Agriculture. The lectures will be held at 8 p m on successive Wednesdays starting March 1 at UFWA headquarters, 532 - 17th Street N W. Lecturers include T. J. Woofter Jr., Chief of the Rural Survey Section of WPA, R. Hudgens, Assistant Administrator of FSA, and Clark Foreman, Director of the Power Division of PWA

WE EXTEND CONGRATULATIONS TO UNION MEMBERS Geniana Edwards of Chemistry and Soils, and Robert Schwenger of the Foreign Agricultural Service. Geniana was awarded her M. A. Degree at George Washington University this month and Robert, we understand, became the proud father of a baby boy on the 13th of February.

COME INTO THE FOLD - JOIN THE UFWA



NAME _____

ROOM _____ PHONE _____

Fill out and send by chain envelope to John A. Schricker
Room 3630 South Building.